



**FORT POINT CHANNEL LANDMARK DISTRICT COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall, Piemonte Room  
Boston, MA, 02201

**JANUARY 9, 2020**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** *David Berarducci, John Karoff, Susan Goganian, and Lynn Smiledge*

**STAFF PRESENT:** *Mary Cirbus, Preservation Planner*

---

**6:00** D. Berarducci called the public hearing to order. He noted the presence of Commissioners D. Berarducci, J. Karoff, S. Goganian, and L. Smiledge.

**I. DESIGN REVIEW HEARING**

**APP # 20.703 SE**

**30-40 MELCHER STREET**

*(Also known as 273 Summer Street and 281-283 Summer Street)*

*Applicant: Andrew Gordon, Spin Boston LLC*

*Proposed Work: At the 30 Melcher Street storefront replace an existing wood door, side panel, and window system with a new aluminum door and window system; replace a wood door system with an aluminum door system; remove three loading dock doors, modify the openings, install raised curbs with louvers, and new overhead door systems; at the courtyard install a new bi-fold door system; At the 40 Melcher Street storefront replace two (2) existing overhead door systems; and remove one wood window system, modify the opening, and install an overhead door system; at both facades, install guardrail systems; at the secondary side façade, create a new masonry opening and install a lower.*

Andrew Gordon, Spin Boston LLC, Matt Demers (architect), Joe DiFreya (landlord) and Josh Brant (contractor) were the project representatives. Mr. Gordon explained SPIN and its mission. The Boston location will be its tenth location. He also explained that they had previously worked with staff N. Armata and gave a brief overview of the extent of the work, which includes replacing the existing loading dock doors, entrances, and other work associated with raising the floor on the interior of the space.

Mr. Demers stepped in to explain the proposed changes to the exterior of the buildings and walked the Commissioners through the details of the proposed work. The three bi-fold doors at 30 Melcher Street conceal a raised platform inside the building, and the floor will need to be raised to ensure that there is one uniform floor level. The two existing roll-down garage doors at 40 Melcher Street are estimated to date from 1940-50. The panels are solid wood with one line of windows. They plan to keep the existing double entry doors but guardrails need to be added to all the openings so that the doors can be opened.



There is a depressed loading bay at the interior of 30 Melcher Street and the sidewalk slopes down towards 40 Melcher Street. For accessibility reasons the floor needs to be one level on the same plane. The proposal calls for build out a frame for the level floor to the doors and clad this raised platform with cast stone that matches the existing lintels.

They also proposed a louver at the side façade, which will be a new opening.

S. Goganian asked Mr. Demers about the original openings – the applicants responded that entry #8 and entry #1 are original. They do not think that the loading dock doors are original, but the Commissioners disagree. She also inquired about the purpose of the roll-down doors, if not for entrances. Mr. Demers added that the doors are for energy efficiency, natural light, and to allow for natural air during the warmer months. There were additional questions regarding the entrance and it was confirmed that the establishment has its own entrance and will not utilize the existing common area entrance (marked by stairs).

D. Berarducci turned the conversation to 40 Melcher Street. He believes that the existing original doors at the easternmost bay, which are double doors, were likely the treatment for all openings at this façade and suggested that the applicants take this approach. The doors open in, and the applicants are reluctant to do so because of the loss of floor space. D. Berarducci reiterated that the Commission would prefer this approach, and that any replacement doors should bring the ground floor closer to its original configuration.

The conversation moved back to 30 Melcher Street and the Commissioners further discussed the openings on this facade. Mr. Demers reiterated that there are existing steel beams on the interior of the bi-fold doors (Entrances #2-4) and a change in the floor plane. Entrance #1 is the entrance to the establishment and must be ADA accessible. The proposed roll-down doors in entrances #2, 3, and 4 are full glass. There was some discussion of cutting the bi-fold doors to fit the new floor space.

D. Berarducci asked if the doors could be kept permanent open on the inside, while the glass door proud of the doors, so that they doors can remain. There was additional discussion about the interior floor plan. S. Goganian added that there are two separate items here – can the original doors be saved; and what doors will replace them? She added that the proposed design is not in keeping with the character of the District. There was additional discussed about the design of the doors. The Commissioners did not like the idea of cutting the doors to fit the modified opening. D. Berarducci offered the idea of keeping the doors permanently open, if the applicants bring the floor level to the doors, rather than the face of the building, and then installed the roll down doors behind the open doors. There was additional discussion as to whether or not it would be possible.

The applicants offered that it might be possible to reconfigure the doors so that they bi-fold outward and remain stacked on the exterior of the building. This approach would



allow for the doors to remain operable. The Commissioners all liked this idea, but agreed that they would like to see a mockup.

There was additional discussion about the design of the doors and question of whether or not the design is in keeping with the district. D. Berarducci noted that the all glass doors might work if the original doors were kept in place because they would stand out as a contemporary addition to the building. The Commissioners agreed that a subcommittee is necessary.

The Commissioners also expressed that the step could now be pushed back and perhaps painted a darker color.

The discussion turned back to Entry #1. The applicants explained that it needs to be ADA accessible. D. Berarducci asked if the doors can be moved up to match the height of the window. The door will swing out and need to be pushed back so that they do not intrude on the public way. The divided lights should remain. He requested that the applicants submit a new drawing showing the taller doors. The windows muntins should be expressed, even though it is not an operable window. The configuration is flipped because there is a coat closet and privacy film will be installed.

The discussion moved back to the doors on 40 Melcher Street. The double door will be restored and the Commissioners would like to see this same configuration across these four openings. The applicants suggested replicating the design on roll-down doors. The garage door part would be hidden behind the transom, opaque. The Commissioners requested shop drawings for each of these doors.

The loading docks will remain as is.

Finally, the Commissioners arrived several provisos for approving the application.

With regard to the proposed changes at 40 Melcher Street:

- That the historic, original doors at the far right (easternmost bay) will be restored and remain in place;
- That the configuration of these original doors are emulated over the next three bays 40 Melcher Street and designed to be roll-down doors with the look of the original doors;
- That the shop drawings for the proposed doors be remanded to staff; and
- That the louver is painted to match the surrounding windows.

With regard to the proposed changes at 30 Melcher Street:

- That the three loading dock bi-fold doors are remanded to subcommittee;
- That the entrance door (Entry #1) is re-proportioned so that the top of the door matches the height of the adjacent window and design details altered accordingly;
- That the sidelight at Entry #1 resemble a window appropriate muntins and trim;
- That the details of the louvers and raised floor, while approved in concept, are remanded to subcommittee.



With regard to the proposed changes at both facades:

- That the guardrails are painted green to match the trim.

**D. Berarducci motioned to approve the application with the aforementioned provisos, and to remand the loading dock doors, floors, and louvers to a subcommittee. S. Goganian seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 (DB, JK, SG, LS).**

## **II. RATIFICATION OF 12/12/2019 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

**S. Goganian motioned to approve the minutes. L. Smiledge seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 (DB, JK, SG, LS).**

## **III. ADJOURNMENT – 7:44 PM**

**S. Goganian motioned to adjourn the hearing. D. Berarducci seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 (DB, JK, SG, LS).**